Deals/issues discussed with France

3022. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister visited France along with Air Chief Marshal recently; and

(b) what are the details of deals/issues discussed and finalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Air Chief Marshal SP Tyagi visited France during June, 2005. During this trip the Chief of Air Staff visited the Paris Air Show, interacted with the French Chief of Air Staff and visited their operational and training establishments. He also visited Istres Airbase (France) to witness the Indo-French Air Exercise "GARUDA-II".

Delay in delivering of Naval frigates

3023. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether during 2003-2004 naval frigates Talwar, Trishul and Tabar were delivered by a Russian firm after delays ranging from 7 to 13 months, at a total cost of Rs. 3040 crores;

(b) whether there were lapses by Indian Navy on synchronizing of training of the crew with actual delivery of frigates and whether the Navy had to incur a loss of more than Rs. 200.00 crores on improper retention of crew and their premature repatriation and also on failure to levy liquidated damages on suppliers; and

(c) the action taken by Navy to fix accountability for the lapses?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There was no lapse on the part of the Navy in the synchronization of crew training and the delivery schedule of the frigates. On account of delay in delivery of ships, Liquidated Damages (LD) was imposed on the seller.